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RUEPADJ/CJTF-HOA CAMP LEMONIER

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 ANTANANARIVO 000084

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DEPARTMENT FOR AF/E AND INR/AA  
PARIS FOR AFRICA WATCHER D'ELIA

E.O. 12958: DECL: 01/25/2017

TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PINR](#) [MA](#)

SUBJECT: MADAGASCAR PRIME MINISTER SELECTS NEW CABINET

REF: A. ANTANANARIVO 0078

[1](#)B. ANTANANARIVO 0060

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Classified By: Ambassador James D. McGee for reasons 1.4 B and D.

[1](#)1. (U) As anticipated in reftels, newly appointed Prime Minister Gen. Charles Rabemananjara (who maintains his portfolio as Minister of Interior), named his new cabinet January 25:

-- Minister to the Presidency in charge of Decentralization and Land Use Planning: Yvan Andrianasandratriniony (Former Ambassador to South Africa);

-- Minister of Defense: Gen. Petera Behajaina (Retained; he is from the coast "Cotier")

-- Minister of Justice: Lala Henriette Ratsiharovala (Retained as the only woman in the Cabinet, although a female academic from Antsiranana, Cecile Manorohanta, was named Vice Minister of Education and Scientific Research);

-- Minister of Civil Service and Social Law: Tsiandopy Jacques (Former Governor of Antsiranana and a Cotier);

-- Minister of Finance and Budget: Benjamin Radavidson Andriamparany (Retained);

-- Minister of Environment and Forest: Koto Bernard (Former Chief of Region of Vatovavy Fitovinany and a Cotier);

-- Minister of Foreign Affairs: Gen. Marcel Ranjeva (Retained);

-- Minister of Health and Family Planning: Dr. Jean Louis Robinson (Retained);

-- Minister of National Education and Scientific Research: Haja Nirina Razafinjatovo (Retained);

-- Minister of Agriculture: Marius Ratolojanahary (Former Secretary General to the Ministry of Agriculture, Poultry and

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Fisheries);

-- Minister of Youth and Sports: Philemon Rabarison (Not well known);

-- Minister of Post, Telecommunications and Communication: Bruno Andrianatavison (Retained);

-- Minister of Economy, Commerce, Planning and Private Sector: Harrison Randriarimanana (Moving over from being Minister of Agriculture, Poultry and Fisheries);

-- Minister of Public Works and Meteorology: Rolland Randriamampionona (In a slight shift of portfolio - he had been Minister of Public Works and Transportation);

-- Minister of Transportation and Tourism: Julien Laporte Rabenarivo (A former official at the Presidency);

-- Minister of Energy: Patrick Ramiaramananana (Former Mayor of Antananarivo and a protege of President Marc Ravalomanana);

-- Minister of Mines: Olivier Donat Andriamahefaparany (In a narrowing of his portfolio; he was formerly Minister of Energy and Mines);

-- State Secretary at the Ministry of Interior in charge of National Police and Public Security: Desire Rasolofomanana (Newly created position).

COMMENT:

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12. (C) The two biggest surprises are the break with tradition in having both President and Prime Minister being from the high plateau; and the number of Ministers who were retained when Post expected a greater shake-up. A few Ministries were combined or split; at first blush these changes seem reasonable. Minister Radavidson's newly-focused Finance and Budget portfolio is a useful effort to improve woeful fiscal

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management. Minister Randriarimanana, one of the Embassy's best contacts during his time at Agriculture, should be up to the task even though he is taking over a new mega-ministry. The split of Energy and Mining into separate Ministries assigns appropriate priority to each of these portfolios so vital to Madagascar's development.

13. (C) From Post's perspective, the biggest disappointments were the retention of Defense Minister Behajaina and Justice Minister Ratsiharovala, both of whom have been relatively ineffective. Post does not interpret the folding of Public Security into the Ministry of Interior to have any negative impact on police or security operations; the move seems administrative.

14. (SBU) Fewer than half of the cabinet is from the coast; a point surely to be exploited by opposition leaders - none of whom were offered the olive branch of a cabinet position. The President will answer this criticism by saying competence, not origin, was his criterion for selection. Post will report septel the impact on U.S.-Malagasy relations, but the initial reaction is very positive with close and effective friends remaining in or moving to top policy posts. END COMMENT.

McGEE